



FloorPrep

Legislative Digest

Wednesday, August 4, 1999

J.C. Watts, Jr.
Chairman
4th District, Oklahoma

House Meets at 10:00 a.m. for Legislative Business

Anticipated Floor Action:

H.R. 1907—American Inventors Protection Act (Vote Only)

**H.R. 2670—FY 2000 Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary
Appropriations Act**



H.R. 2670—FY 2000 Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Appropriations Act

Floor Situation: The House is scheduled to consider H.R. 2670 as its first order of business today. Appropriations bills are privileged and may be considered any time three days after they are filed. Yesterday, the Rules Committee granted an open rule providing one hour of general debate, equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Appropriations Committee. The rule waives House rules that prohibit consideration of legislation within the Budget Committee's jurisdiction that was not reported by it, as well as House rules (1) prohibiting consideration of unauthorized or legislative provisions in an appropriations bill and (2) requiring that committee reports be available for three days before consideration. The rule accords priority in recognition to members who have their amendments pre-printed in the *Congressional Record*. In addition, the rule makes in order three amendments, to be offered by Mr. Bass, Messrs. Tiahrt and Souder, and Mr. Deal, each debatable for 10 minutes. The chairman of the Committee of the Whole may postpone votes and reduce voting time on a postponed vote to five minutes, so long as it follows a regular 15-minute vote. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Summary: H.R. 2670 appropriates \$35.8 billion in FY 2000 discretionary outlays for the departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the federal judiciary, and 18 related agencies—which includes \$4.2 billion from the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund and \$4.5 billion in emergency spending—an amount \$600,000 more than FY 1999 and \$2.7 billion below the president's request.

Department of Justice and the Federal Judiciary. The measure provides a total of \$18.2 billion for the Justice Department, \$6.5 million more than FY 1999 and \$329 million less than the president requested. The bill focuses on enhancing numerous crime enforcement and reduction initiatives by providing (1) \$523 million to restore the local law enforcement block grant, which the president's proposal terminated; (2) \$250 million for juvenile crime and prevention programs; (3) \$1.2 billion for state and local law enforcement assistance; and (4) \$10 million for counterterrorism activities and protections against biological and chemical weapons. The bill also increases funding for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) by \$150 million, for a total of \$3.1 million. In addition, the bill provides \$3.9 billion for the federal court system, mostly for salaries and administrative expenses.

Department of Commerce. H.R. 2670 funds the Commerce Department and related programs at \$8.1 billion, \$2.9 billion more than FY 1999 and \$6.7 billion less than the president requested. This amount includes \$4.8 billion for the Census Bureau—\$4.5 billion of which is designated as “emergency spending”—to conduct the decennial census, as well as \$2 billion for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA), a federal program that also includes the National Weather Service (\$599 million) and the National Ocean Service (\$236 million).

The measure reduces funding for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) to \$141 million and maintains restrictions on LSC-funded agencies from taking cases that involve (1) political redistricting; (2) lobbying activities; (3) class action suits; (4) political demonstrations; strikes, or union organizing; (5) generating attorney's fees; (6) abortion-related issues; (7) welfare reform initiatives; (8) representing illegal aliens; (9) representing convicted prisoners; and (10) representing any public housing tenant facing eviction who has been formally prosecuted for dealing drugs.

Department of State. H.R. 2670 appropriates \$5.8 billion for the State Department and related agencies, \$299.1 million more than in FY 1999 and \$505.7 million less than the president's request (if advanced appropriations are not counted). This amount includes (1) \$351 million in arrearage payments to the United Nations (UN), (2) \$421.7 million for international broadcasting activities, including Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, and Voice of America, a worldwide radio broadcasting initiative; and (3) \$8 million for the Asia Foundation.

Legislative Provisions. In addition, the measure prohibits the use of funds for (1) proposing or issuing rules, regulations, decrees, or orders for the purpose of implementing or preparing for implementation of the Kyoto Protocol; (2) publishing or issuing assessment required by the Global Change Research Act unless the supporting research has been subjected to peer review and published and posted electronically for public comment if otherwise not available; and (3) an FBI initiative called the federal intrusion detection network (FIDNET), a program designed to monitor government and private computer transmissions to prevent “cyberterrorism.”

Views: The Republican leadership supports passage of the bill. An official Clinton Administration view was unavailable at press time. Unofficially, administration officials have indicated that the president opposes the measure.

Amendments: As stated above, the rule specifically makes in order the following three amendments to H.R. 2670, each debatable for 10 minutes and in the order specified below:

- * **Mr. Bass and Mr. Kucinich** will offer an amendment to direct the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to (1) implement measures to relieve the shortage of area codes and phone numbers; and (2) develop and implement by March 31, 2000, a plan to address the inefficient manner in which central office codes are distributed. The amendment also allows states to implement phone number conservation plans if the FCC does not act in a timely manner. *Staff Contact: Tad Furtado (Bass) x5-5206*
- * **Mr. Tiahrt and Mr. Souder** will offer an amendment to prohibit the use of funds for educational materials and/or training and counseling programs implemented by the Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention that undermine or denigrate the religious beliefs of children or adult participants. *Staff Contact: Jeff Kahrs, x5-6216*
- * **Mr. Deal** will offer an amendment to prohibit funds from being used to process or provide visas to citizens of countries that the Attorney General determines to have refused to repatriate their citizens or nationals. *Contact: x5-5211*

— *Other Amendments* —

At press time, the *Legislative Digest* was aware of the following other amendments to H.R. 2670.

Mr. Blagojevich may offer an amendment (#4) to express the sense of Congress that if the national instant criminal background check system determines that an individual has attempted to buy a firearm illegally, the system should immediately notify state and local law enforcement authorities and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) field office. *Contact: x5-4061*

Mr. Campbell may offer an amendment (#5) to grant legal aliens who are subject to detention and/or removal from the U.S. access to the information used to arrest, detain, and deport them. *Staff Contact: Suhail Khan, x5-2631*

Mr. Crowley may offer an amendment (#7) to prohibit funds from being used for joint training programs between the Royal Ulster Constabulary and any federal law enforcement agency. *Contact: x5-3965*

Mr. Ehlers may offer an amendment to increase funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) operations budget by \$390,000 in order for 13 National Ocean Service (NOS) water level-gauging stations to upgrade their computer networks to Y2K compliance. *Staff Contact: Cameron Wilson, x5-3831*

Mr. Hall (OH) may offer an amendment (#8) to eliminate the provision in the bill that requires the \$244 million payment of arrearages for U.N. peacekeeping and for other international organizations be subject to authorization. The amendment does not change the benchmarks in the bill that the U.N. must meet in order to receive the money. *Staff Contact: Bob Zachritz, x5-6465*

Ms. Jackson-Lee may offer an amendment (#9) to increase funding for the citizenship and benefits, immigration support and program direction account by \$15.6 million in order for the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to hire 200 additional adjudicators and additional clerical support staff to decrease the backlog in naturalization cases. The increase is offset by an equal reduction in the INS building and facility construction account. *Staff Contact: Leon Buck, x5-3816*

Ms. Jackson-Lee may offer an amendment (#10) to increase funding for the INS enforcement and border affairs account by \$3.7 million—with an offsetting cut in the state criminal alien assistance program—to augment the starting salary level for new INS recruits from GS-5 to GS-7. The intent of the amendment is to assist the INS in meeting a current law requirement of hiring 1,000 additional border patrol agents each fiscal year. *Staff Contact: Leon Buck, x5-3816*

Mr. Kucinich may offer an amendment (#1) to prohibit funds from being used to file a complaint or any motion seeking injunctive relief in any lawsuit brought under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Implementation Act or the Uruguay Round Agreements Act. *Contact: x5-5871*

Mr. Maloney (CT) may offer an amendment (#11) to increase funding for public safety and community policing grants by \$500,000 (bringing total funding to \$150.5 million), with an offsetting reduction in the law enforcement armored vest grant program and the innovative policing program (which includes initiatives to combat methamphetamine production and trafficking as well as policing initiatives in drug “hot spots.” *Contact: x5-3822*

Ms. Meek may offer an amendment (#12) to allocate \$26 million within the marketing, communications, and partnerships activities account, for community-based organizations to conduct community outreach in census tracts undercounted in the 1990 census. *Staff Contact: Ken Nealy, x5-4506*

Mr. George Miller may offer an amendment (#13) to limit the U.S. contribution to the Inter-America Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) to \$2.4 million. The intent of the amendment is to bring U.S. contributions to the commission in line with U.S. utilization of the fisheries under the IATTC’s management (the U.S. currently funds about 80 percent of the commission’s expenses but utilizes only about 40 percent of the fisheries). *Staff Contact: Jean Flemma, x6-2311*

Mr. Obey may offer an amendment (#14) to designate as “emergency spending” only \$1.7 billion for conducting the 2000 census. The bill currently designates all census funding—\$4.5 billion—as emergency spending. *Contact: x5-3365*

Mr. Sanford may offer an amendment (#15) to prohibit funds from being contributed to the following international organizations: Bureau of International Expositions; International Copper Study Group; International Cotton Advisory Committee; International Center for the Study of Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property; International Institute for the Unification of Private Law; International Lead and Zinc Study Group; International Natural Rubber Organizations; International Vine and Wine; and International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. *Staff Contact: Brent Gibadlo, x5-3176*

Mr. Stearns may offer an amendment (#16) to prohibit funds from being used for the official entertainment expenses of the Secretary of State until Linda Shenwick, a budget specialist forced out of her job after 20 years at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, is (1) reinstated to her former position; (2) reimbursed for her lost wages and expenses; and (3) has her employment files expunged of her “unsatisfactory” evaluation and the documentation used to support it. Ms. Shenwick was fired by the State Department in June for allegedly performing “unsatisfactory” work. Amendment supporters charge that Ms. Shenwick was forced from her job merely for informing the press and the federal government that millions of dollars are being wasted by the United Nations. *Staff Contact: Peter Krug, x5-5744*

Mr. Stearns may offer an amendment (#17) to prohibit funds appropriated to the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPs) program from being distributed to states that do not have laws requiring schools

to expel for at least a year any students caught possessing drugs or illegal drug paraphernalia or bringing firearms to school. The amendment clarifies that states may permit schools to provide educational services to expelled students in an alternative setting. **Staff Contact: Peter Krug, x5-5744**

Mr. Terry may offer an amendment (#18) to increase by \$10 million funding for the Maritime Administration operations and maintenance account, with an offsetting decrease in funding for the National Marine Fisheries Service. The intent of the amendment is to bring total funding for the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy to \$41.7 million. **Staff Contact: Mark Anderson, x5-4155**

Mr. Traficant may offer an amendment (#19) to prohibit funds from being used to transport a prisoner from a maximum security facility to a facility that is not classified as maximum security. **Staff Contact: Dan Blair, x5-5261**

Mr. Visclosky may offer an amendment (#2, #4, or #20) to prohibit funds from being used to negotiate or enter into any suspension agreement under the 1930 Tariff Act regarding any of the following steel products—semifinished, plates, sheets and strips, wire rods, wire and wire products, rail type products, bars, structural shapes and units, pipes and tubes, iron ore, and coke products. **Contact: x5-4261**

Mr. Wu may offer an amendment (#21) to restore funding for the Commerce Department's advanced technology program (ATP) at \$195 million (the bill currently provides no funding). The amendment offsets this increase by decreasing funding for all programs funded under the administration of foreign affairs account by five percent. **Contact: x5-0855**

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, #23, Pt. II, August 3, 1999.



PLEASE NOTE: UNDER AN OPEN RULE, MEMBERS MAY OFFER NEW AMENDMENTS TO A BILL AT ANY TIME, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY HAVE BEEN PRE-PRINTED IN THE *CONGRESSIONAL RECORD*.

To subscribe to this publication via e-mail, please send an e-mail to LegDigest@mail.house.gov and type "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line.

Brian Fortune: *Managing Editor*

Kevin Smith: *Senior Legislative Analyst*

Mary Rose Baker, Scott Galupo,
Brendan Shields, & Heather Valentine:
Legislative Analysts



**Legislative
Digest**

<http://hillsource.house.gov/LegislativeDigest>